Fleur Jaeggy

The Water Statues

• Translated from the Italian by Gini Alhadeff
• Cover design by Oliver Munday

Family, obsession, and privilege boiled down by the icy-hot Swiss-Italian master stylist Fleur Jaeggy

Even among Fleur Jaeggy’s singular and intricate works, The Water Statues is a shinningly peculiar book. Concerned with loneliness and wealth’s odd emotional poverty, this early novel is in part structured as a play: the dramatis personae include the various relatives, friends, and servants of a man named Beeklam, a wealthy recluse who keeps statues in his villa’s flooded basement, where memories shiver in uncertain light and the waters run off to the sea.

Dedicated to Ingeborg Bachmann and fleshed out with Jaeggy’s austere yet voluptuous style, The Water Statues—with its band of deracinated, loosely related souls (milling about as often in the distant past as in the mansion’s garden full of intoxicated snails)—delivers like a slap an indelible picture of the swampiness of family life.

“Such a compellingly cool light—she has a startling ability to go beyond: beyond the sentimental heart, the writerly niceties, the conventions that bind us, and the messy effusions of contemporary life.”

—SHEILA HETI, THE NEW YORKER

“At once serene and startling. Beneath a placid, opalescent surface lurks a threat of violence that may or may not be realized, but which contributes to the profound impression that people and their lives are unpredictable, coursing with icy, barren wildness.”

—EMILY LaBARGE, LOS ANGELES REVIEW OF BOOKS

“Reading Jaeggy is not unlike diving naked and headlong into a bramble of black rose bushes, so intrigued you are by their beauty: it’s a swift, prickly undertaking, and you emerge the other end bloodied all over.”

—DANIEL JOHNSON, THE PARIS REVIEW DAILY

Born in 1940, FLEUR JAEGGY lives in Milan, Italy. Her eight works of fiction and nonfiction have won the Premio Bagutta as well as the Premio Speciale Rapallo and been acclaimed as “wonderful, brilliant, and savage” (Susan Sontag) and “thrilling” (Publishers Weekly).

The author of The Sun at Midday and Diary of a Djinn, GINI ALHADEFF won the 2018 Florio Prize for her translation of Jaeggy’s I am the Brother of XX.
Rosmarie Waldrop

The Nick of Time

“A philosophical tour de force melding astrophysics and grief by the American maestra of the prose poem

“If memory serves, it was five years ago that yours began to refuse,” Rosmarie Waldrop writes to her husband in The Nick of Time. “Does it feel like crossing from an open field into the woods, the sunlight suddenly switched off? Or like a roof without edge or frame, pushed sideways in time?” Ten years in the making, Waldrop’s phenomenally beautiful new collection explores the felt nature of existence as well as gravity and velocity, the second hemisphere of time, mortality and aging, language and immigration, a Chinese primer, the artist Hannah Höch, and dwarf stars. Of one sequence, “White Is a Color,” first published as a chapbook, the Irish poet Billy Mills wrote, “In what must be less than 1000 words, Waldrop says more about the human condition and how we explore it through words than most of us would manage in a thousand pages.” Love blooms in the cut, in the gap, in the nick between memory and thought, sentence and experience. Like the late work of Cézanne, Waldrop’s art has found a new way of seeing and thinking that “vibrates on multiple registers through endless, restless exploration” (citation for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize).

“Waldrop’s art wrenches clarity out of disorientation, and drives us, inimitably, toward the keenest attention, to words, her words, and the world.” —JOHN KEENE, DRUNKEN BOAT

“Waldrop’s poetry makes us think hard about the way language works, and about how words catalyze reality, rather than transcribe it.” —DAN CHIASSON, THE NEW YORKER

ROSMARIE WALDROP, born in Germany in 1935, is the author of several books of poetry, fiction, and essays, and a noted translator of French and German poetry. Her most recent books are Gap Gardening: Selected Poems (winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in Poetry), Driven to Abstraction, and Curves to the Apple. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and is a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. For fifty-six years, she and her husband Keith Waldrop ran one of the country’s most vibrant experimental poetry presses, Burning Deck, in Providence, Rhode Island, where she lives.
Evelio Rosero

Stranger to the Moon

• Translated from the Spanish by Victor Meadowcroft & Anne McLean
• Cover design by Janet Hansen

A fantastical novel about power and subservience by the great Evelio Rosero, winner of Colombia’s National Literature Prize

The writer Evelio Rosero has never been one to shy away from the darker aspects of Colombia’s history and society. His magnificent Stranger to the Moon portrays a world that seems to exist outside history and geography, but taps into the dark myths and collective subconscious of his country’s harrowing inequality and violence. A parable of pointed social criticism, with naked humans imprisoned in a house to serve the needs of “the vicious clothed-ones,” the novel describes what ensues when a single “naked-one” privately rebels, risking his own death and that of his fellow prisoners. Each subsequent section of the book adds further layers to the ritualistic and bizarre social order that its characters inhabit. Trained insects and reptiles spy on all the naked-ones, and only the most fortunate reach old age (often by taking up strategic spots near the kitchen and grabbing for the fiercely contested food). Stranger to the Moon is a powerfully brave and distinctive novel by a writer who is arguably Colombia’s greatest living author.

Praise for Evelio Rosero:

“Rosero affirms unashamedly that literature can and should change social reality.” —ANTONIO UNGAR, BOMB

“Sublime. Moving from offbeat humor to soaring spiritual ecstasy, it has both pathos and punch.” —MAYA JAGGI, THE GUARDIAN

“This quietly devastating novel speaks gently but strikes deep: if our age of cyclical terror and counter-terror needs its own answer to All Quiet On The Western Front, here it is.” —BOYD TONKIN, THE INDEPENDENT

EVELIO ROSERO was born in Bogotá in 1958. His novel The Armies won the Tusquets International Prize and the 2009 Independent Foreign Fiction Prize. VICTOR MEADOWCROFT lives in Brighton, England. He translates from the Spanish and Portuguese. ANNE McLEAN lives in Toronto and her translations include works by Javier Cercas, Julio Cortázar, Juan Gabriel Vásquez, and Enrique Vila-Matas.
Awake

Harald Voetmann’s eye-opening English debut, *Awake*, is the first book of his erudite, grotesque, and absurdist trilogy about mankind’s inhuman will to conquer nature.

In a shuttered bedroom in ancient Italy, the sleepless Pliny the Elder lies in bed obsessively dictating new chapters of his *Natural History* to his slave Diocles. Fat, wheezing, imperious, and prone to nosebleeds, Pliny does not believe in spending his evenings in repose: No—to be awake is to be alive. There’s no time to waste if he is to classify every element of the natural world in a single work. By day Pliny the Elder carries out his many civic duties and gives the occasional disastrous public reading. But despite his astonishing ambition to catalog everything from precious metals to the moon, as well as a collection of exotic plants sourced from the farthest reaches of the world, Pliny the Elder still takes immense pleasure in the common rose. After he rushes to an erupting Mount Vesuvius and perishes in the ash, his nephew, Pliny the Younger, becomes custodian of his life’s work. But where Pliny the Elder saw starlight, Pliny the Younger only sees fireflies.

In masterfully honed prose, Voetmann brings the formidable Pliny the Elder (and his pompous nephew) to life. *Awake* is a comic delight about one of history’s great minds and the not-so-great human body it was housed in.

“A flawless and sparkling little monument to human life.” —INFORMATION

“A slim novel of ideas, seemingly turning its back on the present, or rather illuminating from within a turn that leads to the very history of European mentality.” —SVENSKA DAGBLADET

“Vivid, earthy, by turns hilarious, gross, and tragic, but always powerfully engaging. Reading and rereading this book remains a rare pleasure.” —SUSANNA NIED

Nominated for the Nordic Council Prize, the Danish author HARALD VOETMANN (b. 1978) has written novels, short stories, poetry and a monograph on the Roman poet Sulpicia. He also translates classical Latin literature, notably Petronius and Juvenal. *Awake* is the first in his series of three historical novels: the second centers on the sixteenth-century Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe, and the final book introduces the eleventh-century German mystic Otho of St. Emmeram. JOHANNE SORGENFRI OTTOSEN is a Danish translator born in 1986. She currently lives in Copenhagen where she also works as an illustrator and literary editor.
Patti Smith

Woolgathering

• With a new afterword and photographs by Patti Smith
• Cover design by Erik Rieselbach

An ode to childhood and to “woolgathering” as the wellspring for a creative life—now in an expanded paperback edition

The National Book Award–winner Patti Smith updates her treasure box of a childhood memoir about “clear unspeakable joy” and “just the wish to know” with a radiant new afterword, written during the pandemic and reflecting on current times. This expanded paperback edition also includes new photographs by the author.

A great book about becoming an artist, Woolgathering tells of a child finding herself as she learns the noble vocation of woolgathering, “a worthy calling that seemed a good job for me.” She discovers—often at night, often in nature—the pleasures of rescuing “a fleeting thought.” Woolgathering calls up our own memories, as the child “glimpses and gleans, piecing together a crazy quilt of truths.” Smith shares the fierce, vital pleasures of stargazing and wandering. Her new Afterword, penned during the quarantine, opens new horizons in “the scarcely charted landscape of memory governed by clouds.”

Woolgathering celebrates the sacred nature of creation in Smith’s singular language, acclaimed as “glorious” (NPR), “spellbinding” (Booklist), “rare and ferocious” (Salon), and “shockingly beautiful” (New York Magazine).

“One thing I’ve always admired about Patti Smith is her refusal to be characterized … Such a sensibility—fluid, visionary, risky—marks the eleven pieces in Woolgathering, a collection of impressionistic prose poems that dances at the edge of memoir before opting for something harder to pin down.”

—DAVID ULIN, THE LA TIMES

“Half beautiful language and metaphors, half raw emotion, this book (which includes a handful of personal photos) will inspire and influence a new generation of logophiles as they read and reread this absorbing, meditative work.”

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

A writer, performer, and artist, PATTI SMITH has recorded twelve albums, exhibited her drawings, and published many books, including Coral Sea, Witt, Babel, Auguries of Innocence, Devotion, and Just Kids, which won the National Book Award. Smith lives in New York City.
A. L. Snijders

Night Train
Very Short Stories

Translated from the Dutch and with an introduction by Lydia Davis
Cover design by Jamie Keenan

Brevity is the soul of beauty in these tiny masterworks of short short fiction

Gorgeously translated by Lydia Davis, the miniature stories of A. L. Snijders might concern a lost shoe, a visit with a bat, fears of travel, a dream of a man who has lost a glass eye: uniting them is their concision and their vivacity. Lydia Davis in her introduction delves into her fascination with the pleasures and challenges of translating from a language relatively new to her. She also extols Snijders’s “straightforward approach to storytelling, his modesty and his thoughtfulness.”

Selected from many hundreds in the original Dutch, the stories gathered here—humorous, or bizarre, or comfortingly homely—are something like daybook entries, novels-in-brief, philosophical meditations, or events recreated from life, but—inhabiting the borderland between fiction and reality—might best be described as autobiographical mini-fables.

This morning at 11:30, in the full sun, I go up into the hayloft where I haven’t been for years. I climb over boxes and shelving, and open the door. A frightened owl flies straight at me, dead quiet, as quiet as a shadow can fly, I look into his eyes—he’s a large owl, it’s not strange that I’m frightened too, we frighten each other. I myself thought that owls never move in the daytime. What the owl thinks about me, I don’t know.

“Masterpieces: not a word can be missed.” –DE VOLSKRANT

“When a story ends with a riddle, or a doubt, as many of his do, the subject of the story becomes, in part, really, Snijders’s own questioning, or, more broadly, our own shared habitual uncertainty, perhaps even the shared uncertainty of our human existence.” –LYDIA DAVIS

A. L. SNIJDERS (b. 1937) has become a master of “zkvs” (“zeer korte verhalen” or “very short stories”—a term he invented). In 2010 he was awarded the Constantijn Huygens Prize, one of the most important literary prizes in Holland, in recognition of his work as a whole and especially his “zkvs.” Winner of the Man Booker International Prize for her fiction, LYDIA DAVIS is the author of Break It Down, Can’t and Won’t, The Collected Stories of Lydia Davis, Essays One, and the forthcoming Essays Two. She is also the translator of books by Flaubert and Proust.
Anne Carson

H of H Playbook

• With art by Anne Carson

A gorgeous facsimile edition (reminiscent of her classic book-in-a-box, Nox), H of H Playbook is a stunning re-creation of Euripides’s famous play, with illustrations by the author.

H of H Playbook is an explosion of thought, in drawings and language, about a Greek tragedy called Herakles by the 5th-century BC poet Euripides. In myth Herakles is an embodiment of manly violence who returns home after years of making war on enemies and monsters (his famous “Labors of Herakles”) to find he cannot adapt himself to a life of peacetime domesticity. He goes berserk and murders his whole family. Suicide is his next idea. Amazingly, this does not happen. Due to the intervention of his friend Theseus, Herakles comes to believe he is not, after all, indelibly stained by his own crimes, nor is his life without value. It remains for the reader to judge this redemptive outcome.

“I think there is no such thing as an innocent landscape,” said Anselm Kiefer, painter of forests grown tall on bones.

“Anne Carson’s shape-shifting powers are epic.”
—ELISSA SCHAPPELL, VANITY FAIR

“Carson applies the habits of classical scholarship, the linguistic rigour, the relentless search for evidence, the jigsaw approach to scattered facts, to the trivia of contemporary private life.”
—SAM ANDERSON, NEW YORK MAGAZINE

“She is one of the few writers writing in English that I would read anything she wrote.”
—SUSAN SONTAG

ANNE CARSON is a Canadian poet, essayist, translator and professor of Classics at New York University.
Wisława Szymborska

How to Start Writing (and When to Stop)
Advice for Authors

• Translated from the Polish and with an introduction by Clare Cavanagh
• Illustrated with original collages by Wisława Szymborska

At once kind and hilarious, this compilation of the Nobel Prize-winning poet’s advice to writers is illustrated with her own marvelous collages

In this witty “how-to” guide, Wisława Szymborska has nothing but sympathy for the labors of would-be writers generally: “I myself started out with rotten poetry and stories,” she confesses in this collection of pieces culled from the advice she gave—anonymously—for many years in the well-known Polish journal Literary Life.

She returns time and again to the mundane business of writing poetry properly, that is to say, painstakingly and sparingly. “I sigh to be a poet,” Miss A. P. from Bialogard exclaims. “I groan to be an editor,” Szymborska responds. Szymborska stubbornly insists on poetry’s “prosaic side”: “Let’s take the wings off and try writing on foot, shall we?” This delightful compilation, translated by the peerless Clare Cavanagh, will delight readers and writers alike.

Perhaps you could learn to love in prose.

“Szymborska’s poetry had the gift of creating both the happiness of wisdom felt and the ecstatic happiness of the particulars of life fully imagined.”
—ADAM GOPNIK, THE NEW YORKER

“Wit, wisdom and warmth are equally important ingredients in the mixture of qualities that makes her so unusual and every poem of hers so unforgettable. We love her poetry because we instinctively feel that its author genuinely (though by no means uncritically) loves us.”
—STANISLAW BARANCZAK, NEW YORK TIMES

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA “is unquestionably one of the great living European poets. She’s accessible and deeply human and a joy—though it is a dark kind of joy—to read. She is a poet to live with” (Robert Hass, The Washington Post Book World). Winner of the NBCC in criticism, CLARE CAVANAGH is the Frances Hooper Professor of Arts and Humanities at Northwestern University. She received the American Arts and Letters Literature Award for her translation of Ryszard Krynicki’s Magnetic Point: Selected Poems and her many volumes of prose and poetry by Adam Zagajewski and Wisława Szymborska.
László Krasznahorkai

Chasing Homer

• Translated from the Hungarian by John Batki
• Illustrated: Full-color paintings by Max Neumann
• Extra feature: Music by Szilveszter Miklós, accessed with QR codes
• Cover design by József Pintér

A classic escape nightmare, Chasing Homer is sped on not only by Krasznahorkai’s signature velocity, but also by a unique musical score and intense illustrations

In this thrilling chase narrative, a hunted being escapes certain death at breakneck speed—careening through Europe, heading blindly South. Faster and faster, escaping the assassins, our protagonist flies forward, blending into crowds, adjusting to terrains, hopping on and off ferries, always desperately trying to stay a step ahead of certain death: the past did not exist, only what was current existed—a prisoner of the instant, rushing into this instant, an instant that had no continuation …

Krasznahorkai—celebrated for the exhilarating energy of his prose—outdoes himself in Chasing Homer. And this unique collaboration boasts beautiful full-color paintings by Max Neumann and—reaching out of the book proper—the wildly percussive music of Szilveszter Miklós scored for each chapter (to be accessed by the reader via QR codes).

“Apocalyptic, visionary, and mad, it flies off the page and stays lodged irtractably wherever it lands.” —PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

“László Krasznahorkai is the undisputed laureate of our deranged, vulnerable epoch.” —EILEEN BATTERSBY, THE IRISH TIMES

“László Krasznahorkai is a visionary writer of extraordinary intensity and vocal range who captures the texture of present-day existence in scenes that are terrifying, strange, appallingly comic, and often shatteringly beautiful.” —MARINA WARNER (announcing the Man Booker International Prize)

“LÁSZLÓ KRASZNAHORKAI, born in Gyula, Hungary, in 1954, has won the National Book Award for Translated Literature, the Man Booker International Prize, and the Best Translated Book Award. New Directions publishes nine of his books and three more are forthcoming. JOHN BATKI is a kilimologist, writer, translator, and visual artist. He was born in Hungary and has lived in the United States since age fourteen. MAX NEUMANN is a leading German painter who has had more than 150 solo exhibitions around the world and lives in Berlin. Born in 1983, SZILVESZTER MIKLÓS, a pioneering Hungarian jazz drummer and improviser, graduated from the Franz Liszt Academy.

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Will Alexander

Refractive Africa
Ballet of the Forgotten

• Cover art by Will Alexander

Three kinetically distilled long poems by the singular American poet who “transfigures ‘thought’ into a weave of lexical magic” (Philip Lamantia)

“The poet is endemic with life itself,” Will Alexander once said, and in this searing pas de trois, Re refractive Africa: Ballet of the Forgotten, he has exemplified this vital candescence with a transpersonal amplification worthy of the Cambrian explosion. “This being the ballet of the forgotten,” he writes as diasporic witness, “of refracted boundary points as venom.” The volume’s opening poem pays homage to the innovative Nigerian-Yoruban author Amos Tutuola; it ends with an encomium to the modernist Malagasy poet Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo—two writers whose luminous art suffered “colonial wrath through refraction.” A tribute to the Congo forms the bridge and brisé vole of the book: the Congo as “charged aural colony” and “primal interconnection,” a “subliminal psychic force” with a colonial and postcolonial history dominated by the Occident. Will Alexander’s improvisatory cosmicity pushes poetic language to the point of most resistance—incantatory and swirling with magical laterality and recovery.

“It is tempting to label Alexander a surrealist or experimentalist, but he is truly a singular voice.” —CITATION FOR THE JACKSON POETRY PRIZE

“As we spin toward planetary suicide at the hands of oily capitalizers, it will be the prophetic words of poets such as Will Alexander, with their imaginal radiance, which hold any hope of lighting the way to a true alchemical amnesty and new modes of being.”

—DOROTHY WANG, AUTHOR OF THINKING ITS PRESENCE

“Cosmological, astrological, philosophical, geological, mathematical, and hypnagogical in scope, Alexander finds concordance in chaotic discord. Like a force of nature, a procession of seamless symbols, the lines roll out as variant strata compress into a crystalline composite.”

—JEFFREY CYPHERS WRIGHT, THE BROOKLYN RAIL

WILL ALEXANDER is a poet, novelist, essayist, aphorist, playwright, visual artist, and pianist. He has published over thirty books and chapbooks, and received an American Book Award for Singing in Magnetic Hoofbeat: Essays, Prose, Texts, Interviews, and a Lecture. Alexander, a lifelong resident of Los Angeles, is currently the Poet-in-Residence at Beyond Baroque.
Sylvia Legris

Garden Physic

With illustrations, photographs, and maps
Cover design by Erik Carter

A musical celebration of the garden, from chaff to grass, and all of its lowly weeds, herbs, and creatures

Sylvia Legris’s *Garden Physic* is a paean to the pleasures and delights of one of the world’s most cherished pastimes: Gardening!

“At the center of the garden the heart,” she writes, “Red as any rose. Pulsing / balloon vine. Love in a puff.” As if composed out of a botanical glossolalia of her own invention, Legris’s poems map the garden as the body and the body as garden—her words at home in the phytological and anatomical—like birds in a nest. From an imagined love-letter exchange on plants between garden designer Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson to a painting by Agnes Martin to the medicinal discourse of the first-century Greek pharmacologist Pedanius Dioscorides, *Garden Physic* engages with the anaphrodisiacs of language with a compressed vitality reminiscent of Louis Zukofsky’s “80 Flow- ers.” In muskeg and yard, her study of nature bursts forth with rainworm, whorl of horsetail, and fern radiation—spring beauty in the lines, a healing potion in verse.

“Legris’s work crackles with exuberant wackiness” –CBC/RADIO-CANADA

“For Legris, the sum of life is not necessarily sense, story, or quanta but is also a strange summation of unknowing.” –SHANE NEILSON, POETRY

“Over the past twenty years, Canadian poet Sylvia Legris has quietly built a remarkable, multilayered body of work worthy of deep exploration and appreciation. An artist of relentless evolution and experimentation, Legris’s poetics compress and expand, infusing elements of dance, botany, and human machinery into new structures and imagery that is at once wildly imaginative and deeply visceral.” –TAYLOR DAVIS-VAN ATTA, MUSIC & LITERATURE

Sylvia Legris, born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is the author of the poetry books *The Hideous Hidden*, *Pneumatic Antiphonal*, and *Nerve Squall* (winner of the Griffin Poetry Prize and the Pat Lowther Award). She was a featured artist in *Music & Literature: No. 9*. Legris lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.
RAFAEL BERNAL (1915–1972), the renowned Mexican novelist, journalist, and diplomat, was celebrated for his ability to inhabit and explode various genre forms: *The Mongolian Conspiracy* spun a pulpy noir into literature, and now *His Name Was Death* smuggles sci-fi and ecofiction into new realms. The poet (*Pierrot’s Fingernails*), translator, and book designer KIT SCHLUTER (Boston, 1989) lives in Mexico City. His acclaimed translations from the French and Spanish include books by Olivia Tapiero, Anne Kawala, Jaime Sáenz, Michel Surya, and Marcel Schwob.

NEW DIRECTIONS
Rafael Chirbes

Cremation

Along the Mediterranean coastline of Spain, real-estate developers scramble to transform the once pastoral landscape into tourist resorts, nightclubs, and beachfront properties with lavish bars and pools. The booming post-Franco years have left everything up for grabs. Cremation opens with the death of Matías, a paterfamilias who had rejected all of these changes and whose passing sets off a chain reaction, uncovering a past that had been buried for years, and leading those closest to him to question the paths they’ve chosen.

In a rich mosaic narrative, filled with a hypnotic chorus of voices, Cremation explores the coked-up champagne fizz of luxurious parties shadowed by undergrounds of political corruption, prostitution, and ruthless financial speculation. The novel enters that melancholy ouroboros of capitalist greed that led to the financial crash and captures something essential about our values, our choices, and our all too human mistakes. Like William Faulkner or Francis Bacon, Chirbes stares, clear-eyed, into the abyss, and portrays us as we really are.

“Rafael Chirbes is a master of the kind of Spanish literature that shines most brightly in lyrical descriptive passages and powerful metaphors.”
—MARA FAYE LETHEM, THE NEW YORK TIMES

“Utterly convincing in its psychological details, but also memorable for the beauty of its writing and rhythms.”
—COLM TÓIBÍN

RALFAEL CHIRBES (1949–2015) wrote ten novels and received the National Prize for Literature and the Critics Prize for On the Edge. Writer and translator, VALERIE MILES is the cofounding editor of Granta in Spanish. She curated the first exhibition dedicated to Roberto Bolaño’s archive, and is editor of A Thousand Forests in One Acorn: An Anthology of Spanish-Language Fiction.
Judith Schalansky

An Inventory of Losses

• Translated from the German by Jackie Smith
• Illustrated
• A Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year

Longlisted for the 2021 International Booker Prize, a dazzling book about memory and extinction from the author of Atlas of Remote Islands

Each disparate object described in this book—a Caspar David Friedrich painting, a species of tiger, a villa in Rome, a Greek love poem, an island in the Pacific—shares a common fate: it no longer exists, except as the dead end of a paper trail. Recalling the works of W. G. Sebald, Bruce Chatwin, and Rebecca Solnit, An Inventory of Losses is a beautiful evocation of twelve specific treasures that have been lost to the world forever, and that, taken as a whole, open mesmerizing new vistas of how to think about extinction and loss.

With meticulous research and a vivid awareness of why we should care about these losses, Judith Schalansky, the acclaimed author of Atlas of Remote Islands, lets these objects speak for themselves: she ventriloquizes the tone of other sources, burrows into the language of contemporaneous accounts, and deeply interrogates the very notion of memory.

“Brilliant … an ambulatory and often playful meditation on history and forgetting.”
—KATE ZAMBRENO, NEW YORK TIMES

“Schalansky cements her reputation as a peerless chronicler of the fabulous, the faraway, and the forgotten.”
—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY (starred review)

“Inspired by such genial fanatics, by faded charts, musty documents, a bird’s flight, or a spaceship’s voyage, Ms. Schalansky invites us to see—through a telescope one moment, a microscope the next, and above all through the unmatched lens of the imagination—what a moment or a fragment might reveal.”
—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

“An exploration of extinct animals and objects told through dazzling stories that question the bounds of memory and myth.”
—KIRKUS (starred review)

JUDITH SCHALANSKY, born in Greifswald in 1980, lives in Berlin and works as a writer, book designer, and editor (of the prestigious natural history list at Matthes und Seitz). Her books, including the international bestseller Atlas of Remote Islands and the novel The Giraffe’s Neck, have been translated into more than twenty languages.
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